

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Steny Hoyer (D-MD) joined a bipartisan group of lawmakers from the House and the Senate today to discuss recent findings from the National HIDTA Annual Report on Performance Measures which collectively reject comments made by Drug Czar, John Walters, that the HIDTA Program is "unable to demonstrate results."

Representative Hoyer is a major proponent of the HIDTA program, having been instrumental in having the Washington/Baltimore corridor designated a HIDTA in 1993. The program coordinates the efforts of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, focusing funding on high drug trafficking regions of the country. Rep. Hoyer has secured more than \$112 million to coordinate and fund efforts to combat drug trafficking in this region since 1994. Following are Congressman Hoyer's remarks as prepared for delivery.

"I'm happy to stand here today with HIDTA directors from across the country who have come here to demonstrate just how important and effective this program is.

"I have been a strong supporter of HIDTA for many years. During my time as Chairman and Ranking Member of the then-Treasury-Postal Appropriations Subcommittee, I came to know just how important and effective HIDTA could be for communities trying protect themselves from the scourge of drugs.

"That effectiveness spurred many us in this region to work to found the Washington-Baltimore HIDTA, recognizing that our local law enforcement agencies could benefit from the additional aid and support that HIDTA would bring.

"Since that time, without fail, local law enforcement in my district uniformly report how critical HIDTA has been to there efforts in fighting against drug trafficking.

"On top of that, the results that my friend Tom Carr, Director of the Washington-Baltimore HIDTA, will shortly reveal demonstrate that the HIDTA program is not only effective in keeping our streets safer, but it gives our nation an incredible return on our investment: for every HIDTA dollar spent, \$61 in drugs were seized and \$3 in assets were seized, for a total return of \$64.

“Thus, I was very disappointed when the Administration proposed to transfer the HIDTA program to the Justice Department and cut some \$100 million from the program.

“This move would effectively eliminate the HIDTA program and demonstrates that the Administration simply does not understand how to effectively and efficiently address the drug problem, in partnership with state and local stakeholders.

“Without consulting any of the state and local law enforcement officers on the front lines, or Members of Congress, the Administration unilaterally attempted to disarm those who engage the criminals and traffickers in our communities.

“I am pleased to report this morning that we have rejected that approach. On Tuesday, the Appropriations Committee reported out the Transportation, Treasury, HUD bill that not only retains the HIDTA program in the Office of National Drug Control Policy, but also restores level funding of \$227 million.

“At a time when we are asking our state and local law enforcement agencies to assume additional responsibilities for homeland security, now is not the time to undercut the critical support they get from HIDTA in combating drug-trafficking and the resulting violent crime.

“We need to protect our citizens from the drug trafficking organizations who market their poison to our loved ones, our co-workers, and our communities. The HIDTA program is dismantling these organizations, and will continue to do so in an effective manner.”

For more information on the National HIDTA Program and for highlights of the Report's results, visit [www.hidtadirectors.org](http://www.hidtadirectors.org) or email [contact@hidtadirectors.org](mailto:contact@hidtadirectors.org).

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